

VZCZCXYZ0001
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #1705/01 2131613
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 011613Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5413
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 001705

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,
WHA/EPSC
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)
SUBJECT: WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST; US-PERUVIAN FTA;
MERCOSUR-VENEZUELA; WTO; 08/01/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Local newspapers report on diplomatic negotiations to find a solution to the war in the Middle East; Peruvian president-elect Alan Garcia and the US-Peru FTA; ties between Mercosur and Venezuela; and failed WTO negotiations.

2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "The US will promote a 'lasting solution' at the UN"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" reports (08/01) "The US announced yesterday that it would submit its own draft resolution on the situation in Lebanon, which would compete with another one which was submitted by France last week...

"The French draft resolution asks for an immediate ceasefire, which is rejected by the US based on lack of guarantees for a 'lasting solution.'

"According to the Bush administration, a 'lasting solution' would involve the return of sovereignty to the Lebanese government over its entire territory and the deployment of a supporting multinational force as soon as possible. It would also demand Iran and Syria stop supporting Hezbollah."

- "Bush asks Iran and Syria to stop supporting terrorism"

Conservative "La Prensa" reports (08/01) "US President George W. Bush asked Iran and Syria to stop supporting Hezbollah and refused again to pressure for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East as long as conditions are not ready for a 'lasting' peace in the region.

"US President Bush pointed out that 'Iran should put an end to its financial support and weapons supply for terrorist groups like Hezbollah, and Syria should stop supporting terror and respect Lebanon's sovereignty.'

"... Bush believes that this crisis 'was sparked with Hezbollah's attacks against Israel' and 'is part of a broader struggle between forces of freedom and terror.'"

- "Bush, again on the defensive"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," comments (08/01) "As happened three years ago, when the invasion of Iraq turned out to be a 'marsh' for the White House, US President George W. Bush remained on the defensive both in and outside of the US due to his isolated support for Israel's offensive against Lebanon. He has been criticized by

Democrats, Republicans, analysts and Europeans in front of the eloquent silence of the conservative majority.

"Bush insisted yesterday that the UN Security Council should approve a ceasefire if a lasting peace is to be obtained while he repeats the dogmatic terms that were typical of his discourse in the weeks following the September 11 attacks.

"... Senator Chuck Hagel, one of the most prominent Republican figures on Capitol Hill, said that 'President Bush should call for an immediate ceasefire.' While he labeled the US-Israeli relationship as 'special and historic,' he warned that 'it cannot be so in detriment of the US ties with Arabs and Muslims.'

"According to some other voices, the Bush administration is starting another diplomatic 'chaotic situation,' which will isolate it even further from the international community and will leave it in an increasingly weaker position vis-à-vis other challenges, like the regimes of Iran and North Korea."

- "An offensive that some view as a confrontation between the Islam and the West"

Oscar Raul Cardoso, international analyst of leading "Clarín," writes (08/01) "Oz Almog is an Israeli academician in sociology who gave a detailed explanation in Yediot Achronot newspaper on why the current military operation in Lebanon is only a battle.

"According to Almog, this (battle) will end in some sort of Israeli victory, but it will only serve to open an impasse that will lead to the real burst of what he considers the inevitable future war - Islam versus the 'free world.'

"It is interesting to note that this thought is not new - it is in the basis of the statements made by (US President) George W. Bush and Israeli PM Ehud Olmert. The latter's role in the crisis

increasingly resembles that of a mere representative of Washington's interests in the 'war on terror.'

"... One of the interesting arguments of the article 'Islam versus the world' is that everything that is happening today is similar to a previous moment in history. According to Almog, 1933 is the year to be compared - this is when Adolph Hitler took over in Germany.

"... Almog's story is not new - his view can also be tracked in the chaotic war of civilizations envisioned by Samuel Huntington over a decade ago. The problem is whether the world is willing to advance on this delirium."

- "Unjustified anti-Semitism"

Left-of-center "Página 12" carries an opinion piece by Sergio Widder, Latin American representative at Simon Wiesenthal Center, who opines (08/01) "It is not about war. It is not about the

Palestinian cause, or the struggle against terrorism. It is the most elementary anti-Semitism. During last Sunday's TV program "Hora clave" (Key time), there was a debate about the painful situation in the Middle East, and I had the feeling that I was in the time tunnel visiting the Middle Ages...

"According to Sheik Mosen Ali, Israelis daily seek 'their ration of blood and flesh.' It comes down neither to a territorial or religious dispute but to the fact that Jews need their daily dosage of blood and flesh.

"On the eve of the war in Iraq, I listened to many analysts saying that 'Americans go there for oil.' While it is not a friendly view of the US, it is at least interpreted as a conflict of interests. No one said that 'Americans need their dosage of blood and flesh.'

"This reminds me of the Middle Ages, when Jews were chased and massacred because they were accused of practicing a ritual crime...

"... Many views of the conflict in the Middle East are inevitable, but it is unacceptable that the conflict is used to promote anti-Semitic hatred."

- "Worthy of a Peru?"

Liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald's" executive editor Michael Soltys writes (08/01) "If film buffs assure us that sequels are never any good..., what are we to make of Alan Garcia's return to power in Peru?"

"... The new government can look forward to a political honeymoon despite some fierce criticism..."

"... Perhaps the most important question facing Garcia in the rest of this year is whether the US Congress will ratify the FTA between the US and Peru... Will Garcia lobby as hard for that ratification as Toledo? At least Garcia has taken a stern line against drugs."

- "The future of past"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an op-ed piece by Carlos Perez Llana, professor of International Relations at Siglo 21 and Torcuato Di Tella universities, who writes (08/01) "... During the '90s Mercosur turned out to be a paradox - while progress was being made in trade, this was not the case as far as integration was concerned..."

"... While Brazil was devoted to world diplomacy, there appeared a competitive leadership in the sub-region, which was led by Chavez... Brasilia was not aware of the fact that 'containing' the Bolivarian leader is not feasible because a populist regime that is prone to destabilizing the regional order through an anti-US discourse may not favor a regional agenda for integration..."

- "The cost of the WTO's failure"

Leading "Clarín" editorializes (08/01) "The failure of WTO negotiations made clear the industrialized countries' intransigence as regards their farm policy and seriously damages international trade."

"... During negotiations, the US and Europe introduced new topics to the commercial agenda, such as service liberalization, IPR acknowledgement, and liberalization of foreign investment regimes and governmental purchases. But, at the same time, they systematically refused to make convincing changes in their questioned farm policies."

"... Commercial liberalization will continue advancing through

bilateral and regional deals. However, the paralyzed multilateral liberalization will affect the commercial opportunities of many productive sectors that matter to developing countries, thereby impairing their growth."

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

MATERA